

Selecting and Implementing a High-Quality Curriculum in RI

A Guidance Document

Division of Teaching and Learning

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RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

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RI Curriculum Legislation (2019)

Having access to high-quality curriculum materials is an important component of increasing equitable access to a rigorous education that prepares every student for college and careers. Through this national movement to increase access through high-quality materials, in 2019, [RIGL§ 16.22.30-33](#) was passed which requires the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, and RIDE, to accomplish the following:

- Develop statewide academic standards and curriculum frameworks;
- Identify at least five (5) examples of high-quality curriculum and materials for each of the core subject areas (English Language Arts, Mathematics, & Science);
- Support LEAs in the selection and implementation of curriculum materials.

This legislation requires that all RI LEAs adopt high quality curriculum materials in K-12 schools that are (1) aligned with academic standards, (2) aligned with the forthcoming curriculum frameworks, and (3) aligned with the statewide standardized test(s) (i.e. RICAS, PSAT/SAT, NGSA), where applicable. Furthermore, this selection must be completed by June 2023 for mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) and June 2025 for science. Respective to each content area, implementation should be in place by September following a June selection.

RI's List of Approved High-Quality Curricula (2020)

Rhode Island's list of approved high-quality curricula in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) was published in advance of the 2023 selection and adoption requirement for LEAs (see Appendices A & B). The intent of this published list is to provide LEAs with the ability to choose a high-quality curriculum that best fits the needs of its students, teachers, and community. Each LEA must choose a curriculum from the list for core mathematics, ELA, and science content areas per the timelines outlined in [RIGL§ 16.22.30-33](#). When possible, LEAs should adopt early because every student in Rhode Island deserves access to high-quality curriculum materials.

How were the lists of curricula determined?

RIDE used various factors to determine high-quality, primarily using information from [EdReports](#), a non-profit, independent organization that uses teams of trained teachers to conduct review of K-12 ELA, mathematics, and science curricula. Informed by EdReports as a baseline, RIDE's list

includes only curricula that are rated “Green” in all three gateways: (1 & 2) alignment to standards with depth and quality in the content area, and (3) usability of instructional materials for teachers and students. Because EdReports’ gateways are comprised of many indicators, which provide more in-depth looks across the integral components of instructional materials, it is important to note that having a “Green-rated” curriculum is a solid foundation, yet not enough on its own to ensure alignment to local instructional priorities and students’ needs. Selection is only the starting point in the larger process of adoption and implementation of high-quality instructional materials.

Pre-K curriculum materials are included on a separate list from K-12 ELA and mathematics (see Appendix C). EdReports does not review Pre-K materials due to the inconsistency in Pre-K standards used across the country. Additionally, these materials often include both ELA and mathematics in one set of curriculum materials. Therefore, the materials on this list have been panel-reviewed using RIDE’s Pre-K review tool that aligns to the [Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards \(RIELDS\)](#). For more information about the Pre-K review process and reports please see [RIDE’s Pre-Kindergarten Programs webpage](#).

How are the lists designed to help LEAs select a curriculum?

Districts interested in adopting new curriculum should use RI’s list as one of several resources to select a high-quality curriculum. Coherence is one major consideration when adopting a new curriculum. One way of achieving coherence is the vertical articulation in a set of materials, or the transition and connection of skills, content, and pedagogy from grade-to-grade. Consideration of coherence is necessary to ensure that students experience a learning progression of skills and content that build over time through elementary, middle, and high school. As such, LEAs who consider the adoption of curriculum materials are cautioned against choosing a curriculum that is high-quality at only one grade level, as it is likely it will disrupt a cohesive experience in the learning progression from grade-to-grade in your school or district.

Curricula on RI’s list have been grouped by “families” of materials that have been written as a set or have the same source material. These curriculum “families” have a greater likelihood of coherence due to complementary or similar approaches, pedagogy, and content. Choosing a curriculum from one family is not a guarantee of coherence, however; thought should be given to how students will have continuity of learning over time no matter the adopted curriculum materials.

When, and how often, will these lists be updated?

RIDE published the first list for mathematics and ELA in June 2020. Updates to this list will be released in January 2021, and on an annual basis thereafter. For science, RIDE will release the



first list in June 2021. Updates to the science curriculum list will be released in January 2022, and on an annual basis thereafter.

| Content Area | Initial List Released | Updated List(s) Released | Required LEA Adoption |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mathematics | June 2020 | January 2021 | June 30, 2023 |
| English Language Arts | June 2020 | January 2021 | June 30, 2023 |
| Science | June 2021 | January 2022 | June 30, 2025 |

As the publishing companies begins to meet the demands of the education field, improved curricula materials will be developed that better meet the needs of students. Therefore, RI's list will be updated to reflect this evolving process. Updates to lists will include curricula that are newly reviewed/approved, updated publications for existing curricula, and removals for curricula that have been revised, republished, or unpublished. Versions that no longer meet the RIDE high-quality criteria will be taken off the list and no longer approved for future adoption. For those LEAs who are using a curriculum dropped from the approved list, there will be a three-year period required to transition to a new curriculum that has been approved.

Is the selection process as simple as choosing one from RI's list?

No. RIDE's list of approved high-quality curricula are only a starting point in the process that LEAs must undertake to adopt and implement within the required timelines. In short, LEAs cannot simply pick a curriculum from RIDE's list and consider the process 'complete.' There are significant considerations that must be in place for this work to be sustainable and successful in each LEA, including an in-depth review of the curriculum materials, and a plan for curriculum-specific professional learning aligned to the LEA's priorities. LEAs should create local teams of leaders and educators to go through a comprehensive selection and adoption process that begins with looking at student data and developing an instructional vision. A team approach to this work will allow a variety of stakeholder voices to be heard. In addition to information gleaned from EdReports' and other reviews, the LEA teams should review the curriculum materials through the following areas of focus:

- the needs of multilingual learners
- foundational reading skills for all learners (K-2)
- overall cultural responsiveness and representation of student identities

Each of the above focus areas are accompanied by a companion guidance document from RIDE. Using all of the information at a team's disposal, LEAs should make curriculum adoption-related



decisions based on their instructional vision for the students in their community. For more information on the review process, [please review RIDE's Review Tools to Support Selection of HQCM here](#).

Can LEAs opt-out from having to select a curriculum from RI's list?

LEAs cannot opt out of RI's legislative requirement to adopt and implement a high-quality curriculum. However, the legislation built in waiver options which account for three circumstances in which LEAs can apply for flexibilities due to financial hardship, a third-party review of a curriculum not on RI's list, or student achievement results. For more information on these waiver options, [please review RIDE's Options to Waive HQCM Selection here](#).

Selecting a High-Quality Curriculum

Since 2018, RIDE partnered with [EdReports](#) to support RI LEAs in selecting and adopting high-quality curriculum. EdReports, a national leader in the field of high-quality curriculum reviews, has developed a comprehensive process for selecting high-quality curriculum materials. This process requires LEAs to construct teams that include teachers, specialists, content leaders, building administrators, and/or central office administrators to facilitate this important work. Additionally, the decision to adopt a new curriculum requires a deep engagement with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the selection, and subsequent plan for implementation, is representative of the LEA's instructional vision, priorities, and students' needs.

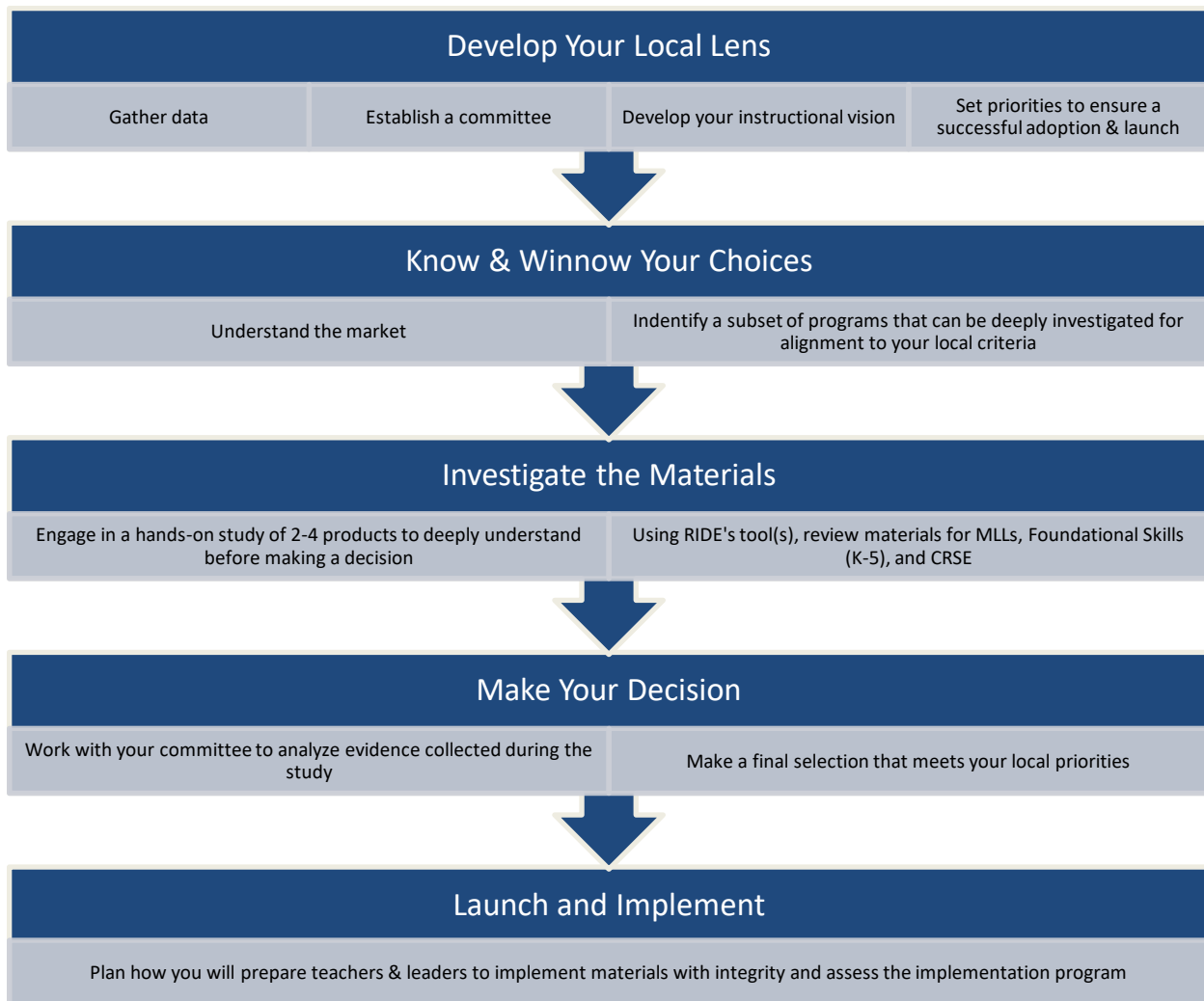
The diversity and needs of students are an integral component of the curriculum selection process. When reviewing RI's list of approved high-quality curricula, it is critical that LEAs understand that not all approved curriculum materials are designed the same. As such, materials should be reviewed in-depth to understand how they meet students' needs. While each set of curriculum materials on this list meet overall expectations, each curriculum also has strengths and weaknesses that must be considered and understood before selecting. To do this, RIDE created one-page summaries (accessible as embedded links in Appendix A) for each approved curriculum on the list as a resource for LEAs to target specific areas through which to dig deeper into EdReports, [Massachusetts' CURATE](#), and [Louisiana Believes](#) reports. This deep review will help LEAs to further understand the strengths and weaknesses of each curriculum toward an alignment with their instructional vision and students' needs.

During the selection process, LEAs should conduct an additional review of curriculum-embedded supports for Multilingual Learners (MLLs), Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education (CRSE),



and Foundational Reading Skills in order to winnow the choices and make a final selection. While EdReports includes indicators on MLL supports and Foundational Reading Skills, additional work is needed to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all students and are culturally responsive. In order to support this work, RIDE developed guidance and tools which can be found

EdReports developed a step-by-step workbook that will supports teams in this process entitled [*Selecting for Quality: EdReports' Guide for Adopting High-Quality Instructional Materials*](#). The overall steps in this comprehensive process are as follows:

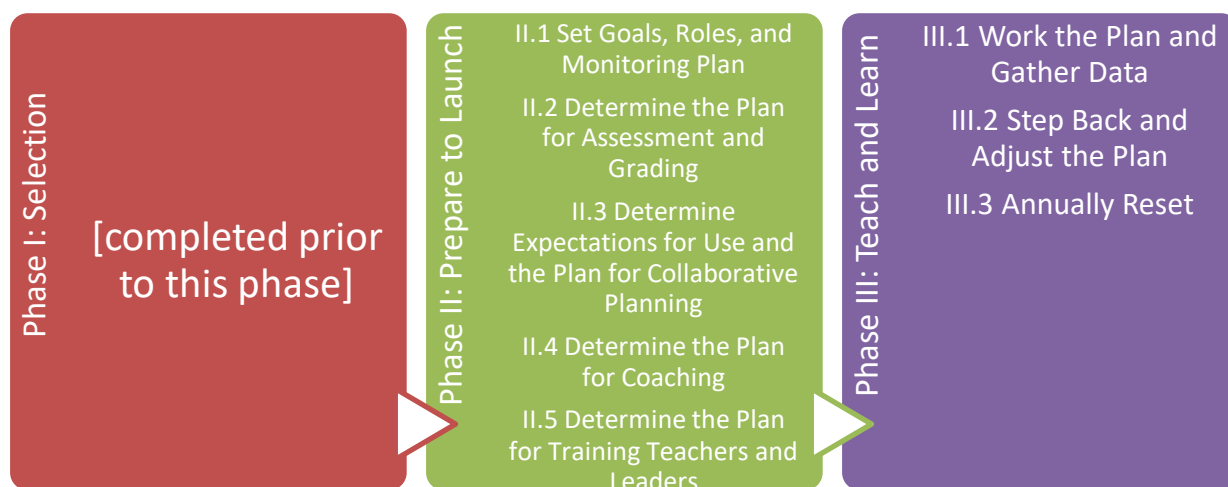


Implementing a High-Quality Curriculum

The process of selecting and adopting a high-quality curriculum must coincide with planning for implementation. Successful implementation includes thoughtful planning around financing, scheduling, staffing, professional learning, instructional support, and other operational considerations to support teachers and students through the change process. These planning processes help to bridge a productive transition from selection to implementation.

Since 2019, RIDE has collaborated with [Instruction Partners](#) and multiple RI LEAs to learn about the process of implementing a high-quality curriculum. Instruction Partners specializes in working closely with LEAs to build the capacity of system and school leaders to support effective and equitable instruction.

Instruction Partners has created a comprehensive process to support implementation through their [Curriculum Support Guide](#). This workbook is designed to be used by teams of educators working through the selection and implementation journey for their school or system together. Knowing that teams have engaged with EdReports' guide for selection and adoption prior to this phase, RIDE has intentionally left out Phase I of Instruction Partners' workbook to avoid redundancy. Therefore, the implementation process should be supported through phases, which at a high-level, are organized as follows:



RIDE encourages you to send your questions related to the content presented in this guidance document to curriculum@ride.ri.gov.

Appendix A – RI's Approved List of English Language Arts (ELA) Curricula

| Approved English Language Arts (ELA) Curricula | Publisher | Grade Span |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Amplify ELA (2016) | Amplify | 6-8 |
| Amplify ELA (2019) | Amplify | 6-8 |
| Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) (2015) | Amplify | K-5 |
| ARC (American Reading Company) Core (2017) | ARC | K-12 |
| Benchmark Advance (2018) | Benchmark Education Company | 6 only (3-5 Not HQ) |
| Developing Core Literacy Proficiencies (2016) | Odell Education | 6-12 |
| EL Education K-5 Language Arts (2017) | Open Up Resources | K-5 |
| Expeditionary Learning (2016) EL Education | EL Education | 6-8 |
| LearnZillion EL Education K-5 Language Arts (2019) | LearnZillion | K-5 |
| Engage NY (2016) | Engage NY | 6-8 |
| Into Literature (2020) | Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | 6-12 |
| Into Reading (2020) | Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | K-6 |
| LearnZillion Guidebooks (2018) | LearnZillion | 6-8 |
| MyPerspectives (2017) | Pearson | 6-12 |
| myView Literacy (2020) | Pearson | K-5 |
| ReadyGEN (2016)* | Pearson | K-6 |
| Paths to College & Career (2016) | John Wiley & Sons | 6-8 |
| Paths to College & Career English Language Arts 9-12 (2015) | John Wiley & Sons | 9-12 |
| Springboard ELA Common Core Edition (2018) | College Board | 9-12 |
| StudySync (2017) | McGraw-Hill Education | 6-12 |
| Wit & Wisdom (2016) | Great Minds | K-8 |
| Wonders (2020) | McGraw-Hill Education | K-5 |
| Not HQ = Curriculum is not green in all 3 of EdReports' gateways * = Available for existing users. New adoptions must seek alternative. | | |

Appendix B – RI's Approved List of Mathematics Curricula

| Approved Mathematics Curricula | Publisher | Grade Span |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Agile Mind (2016) | Agile Mind | HS |
| Agile Mind Integrated Mathematics (2019) | Agile Mind | HS |
| Agile Mind Middle School Mathematics (2016) | Agile Mind | 6-8 |
| Bridges In Mathematics (2015) | The Math Learning Center | K-5 |
| Carnegie Learning Math Solution (2018) | Carnegie Learning | 6-8 |
| Carnegie Learning Math Solution Integrated (2018) | Carnegie Learning | HS |
| Carnegie Learning Math Solution Traditional (2018) | Carnegie Learning | HS |
| Core-Plus Mathematics (2015) | McGraw-Hill Education | HS |
| CPM Integrated (2015) | CPM Educational Program | HS |
| CPM Traditional (2015) CPM Educational Program | CPM Educational Program | HS |
| Core Connections (Grades 6-8) (2013) | CPM Educational Program | 8 only (6-7 Not HQ) |
| Discovering Math: Algebra (2014), Geometry (2015), Advanced Algebra (2017) | Kendall Hunt | HS |
| EdGems Math (2018) | EdGems Math LLC | 6-8 |
| enVision A/G/A (2018) | Pearson | HS |
| enVision Florida Mathematics (2020) | Pearson | 6-8** |
| enVision Mathematics Common Core (2020) | Pearson | K-5 |
| Eureka Math (2013-2014) | Great Minds | K-5 (6-8 not HQ) |
| Eureka Math (2015) | Great Minds | |
| HMH Into Math (2020) | Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | K-8 (HS not HQ) |
| Kendall Hunt's Illustrative Mathematics 6-8 Math (2019) | Kendall Hunt | 6-8 |
| Kendall Hunt's Illustrative Mathematics Traditional (2019) | Kendall Hunt | HS |
| LearnZillion Illustrative Mathematics 6-8 (2018) | LearnZillion | 6-8 |
| LearnZillion Illustrative Mathematics Traditional (2019) | LearnZillion | HS |
| Open Up Resources 6-8 Math (2017)* | Open Up Resources | 6-8 |
| McGraw-Hill Illustrative Mathematics 6-8 Math (2020) | McGraw-Hill Education | 6-8 |
| Math Expressions (2018) | Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | K-5 (6 not HQ) |
| My Math (2014) | McGraw-Hill Education | 4-5 (K-3 not HQ) |
| Ready (2017) | Curriculum Associates | K-8 |
| Ready Classroom Mathematics (2020) | Curriculum Associates | K-5 |
| Reveal Math, Common Core Edition (2020) | McGraw-Hill Education | 6-12 |
| Zearn (2016) | Zearn | 1-5 only |
| Not HQ = Curriculum is not green in all 3 of EdReports' gateways; * = Available for existing users. New adoptions must seek alternative.; **=Florida edition can be used to expand CC edition | | |

Appendix C – RI's Approved List of Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Curricula

| Approved Pre-K Curricula | Publisher | Edition |
|--|---|---|
| HighScope Infant, Toddler and Preschool Children (2012) | HighScope Educational Research Foundation | 4 th Edition |
| Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers, 5th and 6th editions (Available in Spanish) (2010 & 2016) | Teaching Strategies, LLC | 5 th and 6 th Edition |
| Boston Public Schools, Focus on Pre-K | Boston Public School | N/A |